

Alton Brown's Baked Macaroni and Cheese

Serves 6-8

Easy: requires 20 minutes to prep and 55 minutes to cook.

Ingredients:

Base:

½ pound elbow macaroni
3 tablespoons butter
3 tablespoons flour
1 tablespoon powdered mustard
3 cups milk
½ cup yellow onion finely diced
1 bay leaf
½ teaspoon paprika

1 large egg
12 ounces sharp cheddar cheese
shredded (9 ounces + 3 ounces)
1 teaspoon kosher salt
Fresh black pepper

Topping:

3 tablespoons butter
1 cup Panko bread crumbs

1. Preheat oven to 350°
2. Cook pasta to al dente in a large pot of boiling salted water.
3. While pasta is cooking, melt the butter in a separate pot.
4. Whisk in the flour and mustard and keep it moving for about 5 minutes (make sure it is free of lumps)
5. Stir in the milk, onion, bay leaf, and paprika
6. Simmer for 10 minutes and remove the bay leaf
7. Temper in the egg (add small bits of the mixture to the egg to combine but not scramble the egg until egg is hot, then add egg to mixture)
8. Stir in $\frac{3}{4}$ of the cheese (9 ounces)
9. Season with salt and pepper
10. Fold the macaroni into the mix and pour into a 2-quart casserole dish
11. Top with remaining (3 ounces) cheese
12. Make the topping by melting the butter in a sauté pan and toss the bread crumbs to coat, then top the macaroni with the bread crumbs
13. Bake for 30 minutes, remove from oven, and rest for 5 minutes before serving
14. Save the leftovers for fried Macaroni and Cheese